

Response to the Esperance Fires

November 2015



THE GOLDFIELDS SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY TEAM



Our story



- 1: Context
- 2: Response
- 3: The team



1: Context



The Goldfields Region

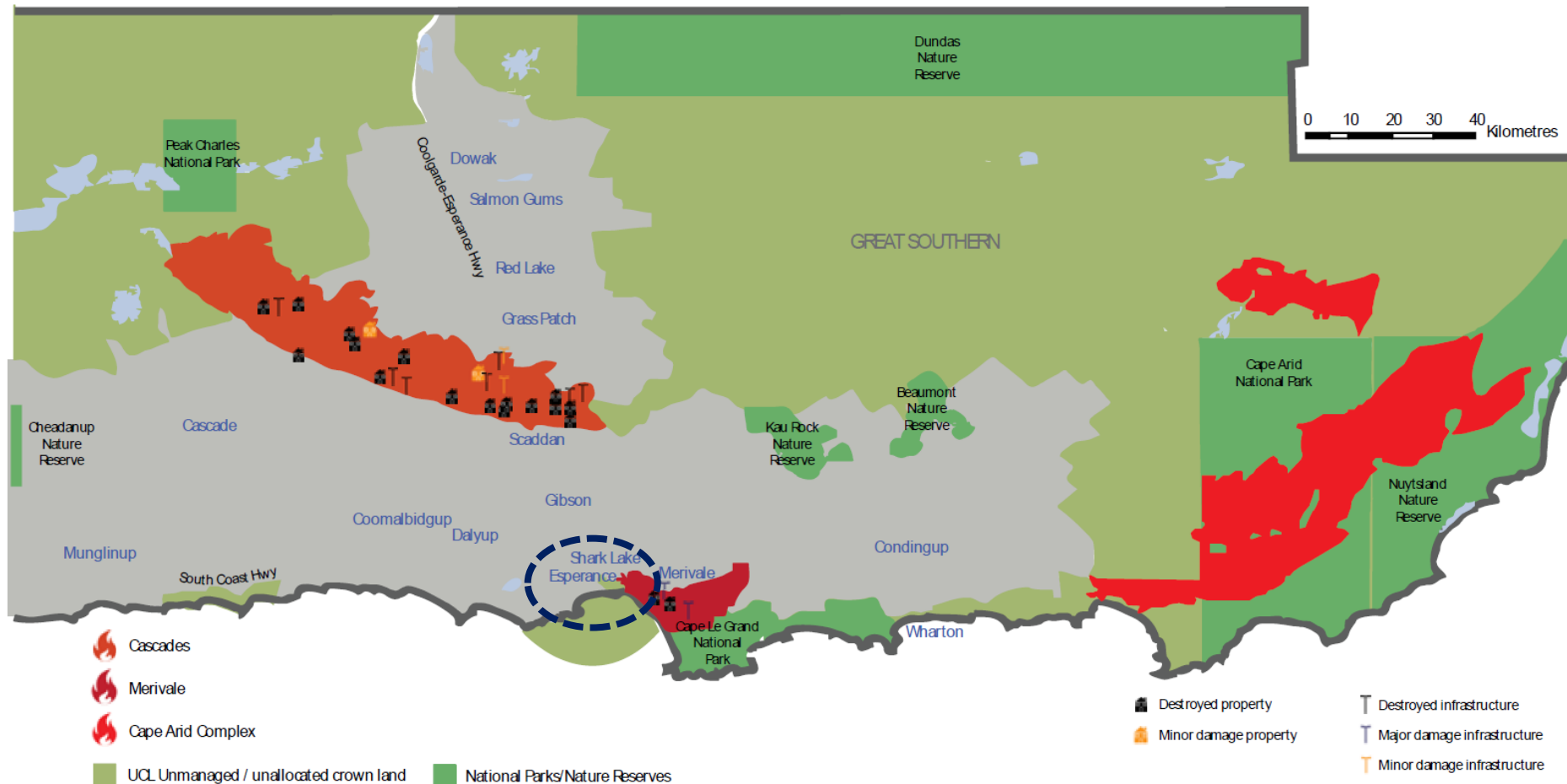


- 58 schools in our region
- 16 schools in Esperance area
- 4 school closures (25%)
- 10 regional School Psych's
- 2 regional Lead School Psych's
- 3 SP + 1 LSP - Esperance



Map of complex fires

Figure 8: Esperance district bushfires on 26 November⁵¹

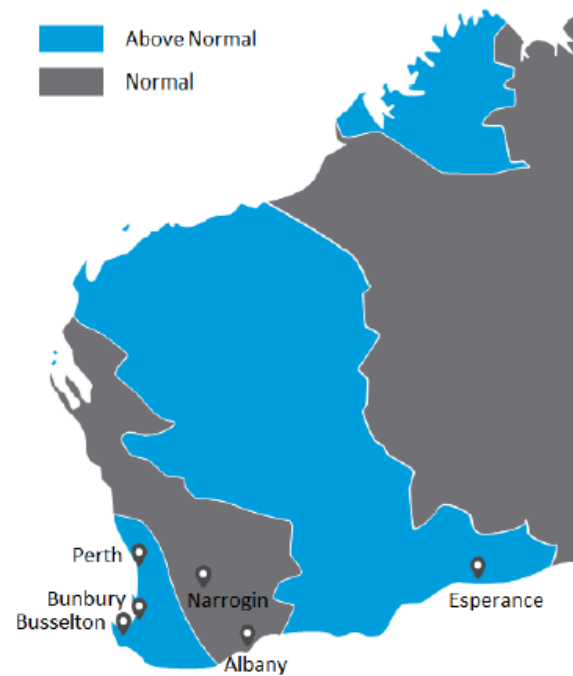


2015 Esperance Bushfires



- 15 – 26th November
- Destruction of telecommunications infrastructure
- 4 fatalities
- 330 000 hectares were burnt
 - Total fire perimeter of 1006 km
 - Equivalent to 5.5 Million residential blocks (600 sqm)
- 3 houses
- 16 non-residential structures
- 4500 livestock
- 500 000 tonnes of grain

Figure 2: Bushfire potential for the 2015-16 fire season as at November 2015¹⁹

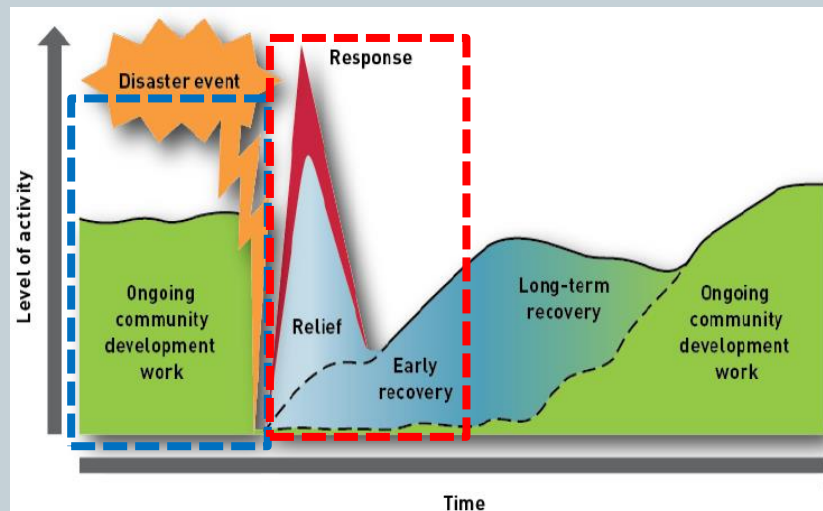
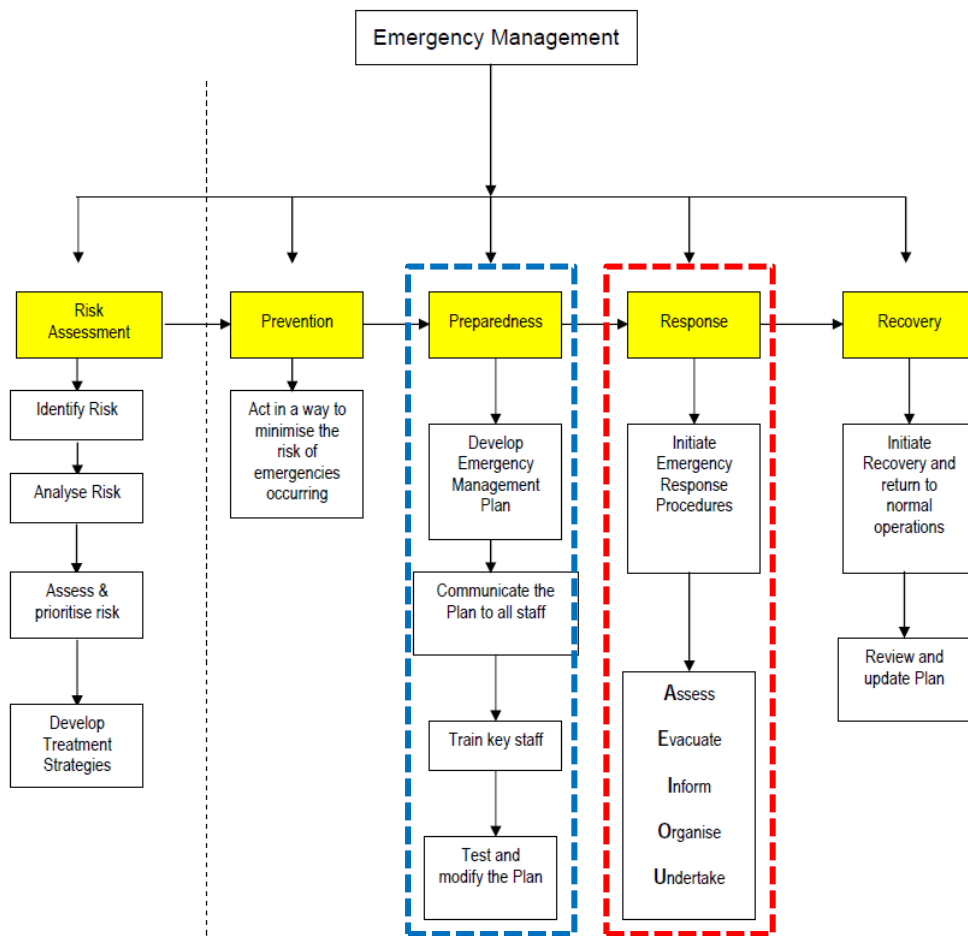




Department of Education

Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan

APPENDIX B THE COMPREHENSIVE/ALL HAZARDS APPROACH TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Effect of disaster on ongoing community development and interface with relief and recovery (Australian Emergency Management Institute's Community Recovery Handbooks #2, 2011, p29)

2: Response



Our response



**Acknowledge
Align
Assure**

To provide the highest level of psychological care to our local schools and their communities for as long as they require it.

*Our goal is set in concrete
Our plan is written in sand*

Our response



Our response

Principal briefings and staff planning

School support



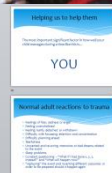
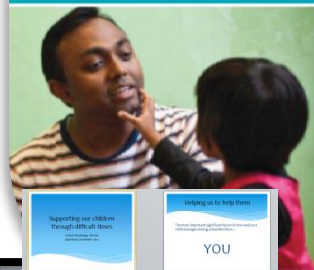
Grounding
Developing
Anxiety ma
Teach emo
Enhance p
Facilitating
strengthen

Parent and community workshops



Helping children and young people cope with crisis

Information for parents and caregivers



Australian Red Cross
THE POWER OF HUMANITY

This booklet is designed to:

- help parents understand why and how children might react to challenging or overwhelming experiences
- help parents respond to the needs of their children.

Some words of encouragement:

- no-one knows your child as well as you do
- family is the most important support network for young children
- getting help can be a good idea.

A little early help can save a lot of heartache.

See the suggestions at the back of this booklet. ►

Original content compiled by Ruth Wraith and Australian Red Cross (2010). Australian Red Cross acknowledges the use of material from 'What Parents Can Do: Helping Children and Adolescents Cope With Violence and Disasters' published by the National Institute of Mental Health, USA (2006). This resource was originally developed with the generous support of the Alfred Petron Bequest and ANZ Trusts Program, Charitable Purposes in Victoria - Ruth Wraith, Emma, Bandigo and Adelaide Bank Community Enterprise Foundation and Eldon & Anne Foster Trust of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. Red Cross thanks the parents and young people affected by emergencies who shared their stories in the development of this booklet. Thank you also to the agencies and mental health professionals who assisted in the consultation and drafting stages of the project. All people featured in photographs have consented to the use of their image in Red Cross resources.

Cover photo credit: Australian Red Cross / Rodney Dekker & Australian Red Cross / Tim Lofthouse

This booklet uses the term 'parent' when referring to the primary caregivers.

This may also include family members or other close or trusted adults.

The words 'child' and 'children' are used when referring to all young people aged 0-25 years.

Our response

Support the community

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AFTER A DISASTER

 **Lifeline**
Information

Supporting others
difficult time

Steve Kipling (School Psychol
Helen Dorevich (Experiences Pa
Bagoenas, November2

Importance of lis

"The most basic of all human nee
understand and be understood.
understand people is to liste
— Ralph Nichols

Remember: Most communicatio
verbally. Maintain eye contact and
body language.

Lifeline's
will prov

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Developin

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community
disaster

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF
AFTER A DISASTER

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unities tool k

Australian Centre for
Posttraumatic Mental Health
Australian Red Cross
The Power of Humanity

 **Lifeline**
Information Service
Tool kit
Coping with loss and
change in a community
after a natural disaster

Lifeline's coping with loss and change in communities tool kit
will provide some practical information about:
Understanding loss and change in communities
Understanding common emotions during loss and change
Understanding reactions to stress
Developing some strategies to help cope with traumatic events

services that

10

media unit

 Australian Centre for
Posttraumatic Mental Health

 **beyondblue**
The National Depression Initiative

 **Shire of
Esperance**
We make it happen!

 **Australian Red Cross**
THE POWER OF HUMANITY
 **DFES**
Department of Fire &
Emergency Services

 **CENTRECARE**
"People Making Time for People"

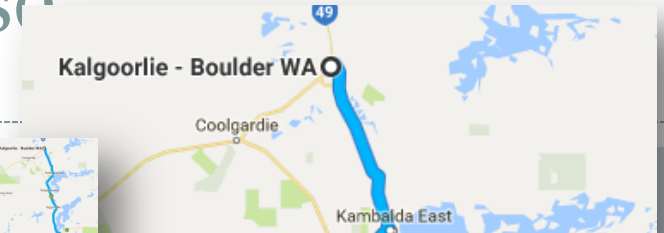
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Collaboration

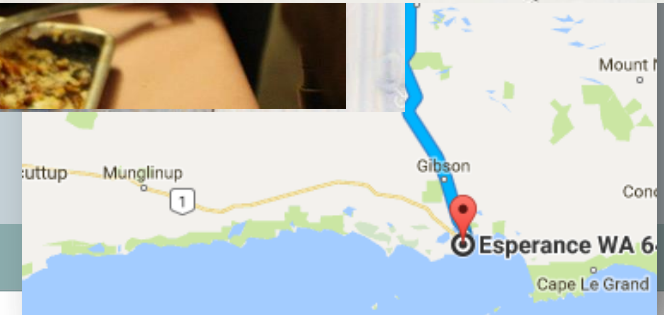
 **YouthCARE**
Supporting WA school communities

Our response

Support from
Kalgoorlie



Op
debrief and
access support
outside the team



3: Our Team



Our Team



- Positive Psychology
- Personal vs. Professional Impact
- Conscious competence model
- Compassion fatigue



Summary



- A strengths based approach that focused on meeting the needs of our schools and their communities.
- A response that was sustained and diverse.
- Support is ongoing.

